

Our global economy presents great opportunity. Ninety-five percent of the world's consumers live outside the United States, and they all need to eat. As a result, we are seeing growing demand for Nebraska's agriculture products. Our State's beef exports reached a record high, \$1 billion in sales, in 2014.

The efficiency and forward thinking of our ag producers is making it possible to meet demand with fewer inputs and less waste.

As founder and cochairman of the Modern Agriculture Caucus, I am committed to promoting scientifically based innovation and policies.

On this National Agriculture Day and Agriculture Week, please join me in thanking the many producers working tirelessly to support our economy and help feed the world.

BOSMA ENTERPRISES AND ABILITYONE

(Mr. ROKITA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an exemplary partnership between the AbilityOne Program, an extraordinary initiative that helps people with disabilities, and Indiana's own Bosma Enterprises.

For the past 25 years of Bosma's 100 years in business, their partnership with AbilityOne has helped disabled Hoosiers achieve a greater level of independence and enabled many to gain employment in good-paying jobs.

Nearly 60 percent of all employees there are blind or suffer some degree of visual impairment. One such man is Don Green. Don is totally blind and found it very difficult to reenter the job market. About to give up after almost 200 job rejections, Don applied to Bosma, which, because of its contracts through AbilityOne, was able to hire him as a material handler. Just 6 years later, Mr. Speaker, Don is a production supervisor, managing 40 people.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the work that Bosma Enterprises is doing in partnership with the AbilityOne Program. They open doors of opportunity and help make the State of Indiana, my beloved State, a better place to live each and every day.

THE AMERICAN PATENT SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend from New York (Mr. KATKO).

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ABUSE

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about important issues that face our society, domestic violence and sexual abuse.

As a former Federal prosecutor for the last two decades, I witnessed how violence affects people of all ages, races, religions, and socioeconomic conditions. Domestic violence does not discriminate.

Our country has a moral obligation to stand up against those who exploit their power to commit violence against men, women, and children.

In an effort to raise awareness and to put an end to domestic violence and sexual abuse, my district will be kicking off the White Ribbon Campaign. The White Ribbon Campaign is one of the largest efforts in the world of people working together to prevent and end domestic violence and sexual assault against women, men, and children. The White Ribbon Campaign will begin this Friday, March 20, and run through March 29.

Vera House of Syracuse, New York, is spearheading the local effort in my district. Vera House is a comprehensive domestic and sexual violence service agency that provides shelter, advocacy, and counseling services for women, children, and men. They also provide education and prevention programs and community coordination.

Vera House will be providing white ribbons, such as the one on my lapel here, and white wrist bands, such as the white one on my wrist here today, in an effort to build awareness and put a stop to domestic violence and sexual abuse.

From March 20 to March 29, thousands of my constituents in central New York will be wearing a white ribbon or a white wristband to raise awareness about domestic violence and sexual abuse.

I encourage my House colleagues to join me and New York's 24th Congressional District in wearing a white ribbon to put a spotlight on this very important issue. Wearing the white ribbon demonstrates a personal pledge to never commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against men, women, or children.

I hope my country can join me today to support survivors of abuse while providing alternatives to this destructive cycle.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I hope everyone paid attention to that wonderful idea that has just been given to us.

These Special Orders play a role here in that we permit ourselves the opportunity to hear from people for a little bit more than 1 minute to talk about issues that are significant and who would like to bring them to the attention of the American people and, of course, to their colleagues here in Congress.

Today I intend to bring the attention of the American people and my colleagues to a threat to the well-being of the American people, a major threat that has gone unrecognized and could well change our way of life and change the way of life for our children and destroy one of the basic rights that were

written into our Constitution in order to protect the prosperity and security of our country.

I am talking about the changes that are being proposed in our fundamental technology law, in our patent system. And I know that sounds very boring to most people. But the fact is, without a strong patent system, the American people would be at the mercy of both competitors, in terms of their labor overseas, but also in terms of the vicious and totalitarian elements in other countries that might want to do us harm.

□ 1245

It is our ability to produce the technology that America needs in order to make our people competitive and to produce the wealth that is necessary for a decent standard of living that has made America the great country that it is. We are a great country not because we have very powerful and wealthy interests here in the United States, which we do. We are a great country because ordinary people are permitted to live decent lives and because our country has not been challenged throughout its history over and over again and had to waste all of our resources and all of our wealth on vast amounts of armaments and drafting all of our people into the military and having a militarized society in order to have us safe from a foreign threat. No. What we have done is we have been able to produce wealth dramatically in our country and had our workers' being competitive with labor from around the world because we have been technologically superior.

Mr. Speaker, there is a threat to that technology superiority, an incredible threat that is being foisted off on the Congress and the American people. I am here to alert my fellow Members of Congress to this threat.

One needs only to see how important the technology element of our society has been right here in the United States Congress. There is a statue here in the Capitol to Philo Farnsworth. Now, who the heck knows who Philo Farnsworth was? Well, not many. But there is a statue to him here because he represents a very significant part of the American story.

Philo Farnsworth was a farmer in Utah, a man who was educated in engineering, but a man who had very little resources. He set out in between farming to try to find and discover a technological secret that had perplexed some of the most powerful and financial interests in our country.

RCA, at that time under a man named David Sarnoff, was America's premier technology company, a company that had vast resources and was deeply involved in trying to find out how to invent a picture tube, how we would have a tube that showed images rather than just radio waves that had voice on them. This was a huge challenge and a historic challenge. RCA pumped millions of dollars of research into this.

The one who discovered this secret was Philo Farnsworth, an independent inventor, a man who was a farmer in Utah. He discovered the secret and then wrote to RCA very naively believing that this big corporation would honor his discovery and permit him to have the benefit—or at least a benefit—from this discovery.

Yes, then RCA sent Philo Farnsworth a representative from their laboratories. When he described what he had found, the scientist from RCA went away saying, “We will be in touch,” and never got in touch. The next thing that Philo knew was that there was an announcement that RCA had made a major breakthrough in discovery—only it was exactly the discovery that Philo Farnsworth had made and had transmitted the information to RCA.

This became one of the great jury and great legal battles of the early 20th century. Philo Farnsworth, an individual person, was up against the most powerful American corporation of the day, RCA, and had one of the strongest and toughest leaders of that corporation, David Sarnoff, who vowed not to give him a penny and not to recognize him because it was RCA that actually came up with this.

Philo Farnsworth was able to mobilize support behind his claim. He was able to have people invest in his lawsuits, and slowly but surely they made their way through our court system all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States. God bless the United States of America. A single man, a poor, individual farmer who had come up with an important technology secret had his rights respected by our Supreme Court over the power and influence of America's most powerful corporation of the day, RCA.

Philo Farnsworth was recognized as the inventor, the inventor of the picture tube which has transformed our country and transformed the world. All the picture tubes you see, and now the screens that we see on our computers, can be traced back to the discovery of this one individual, Philo Farnsworth, and the tragedy that his life was because, over the years, he lived a very poor life. He had very little resources. By the time he won the Supreme Court case, it was late in his life, and he did not benefit, as he should have greatly, from that.

We have a statue to this wonderful American, a man who stands for what America stands for, using technology to benefit the people, not just to enrich huge corporate interests. Indeed, Philo Farnsworth has a statue here in the Capitol. But you will never see a statue to David Sarnoff of RCA. That shows you where the heart and soul of America is.

The fact that we had a Supreme Court that decided for the little guy rather than the huge, powerful corporation showed what kind of country we have. That is what makes America great. That is what has created the new

technologies that have uplifted our people and made sure that our people were competitive and, thus, had high standards of living and that we were secure from foreign threats because we were technologically superior to those foreign threats.

This is what has made America great, and today it is in jeopardy. The technological edge of our country will be robbed from us by multinational corporations who are powerful and are shifting issues through the Congress that will greatly diminish the patent protection of the American people. Had these same changes in the law that these multinational corporations would now foist upon us been the law in the days of Philo Farnsworth, we would have no picture tube. We would never have had a Philo Farnsworth. We would never have had the recognition of the creative genius of the American people. Instead, we would have had the powerful, rich, multinational corporations running roughshod over America's creative genius.

No. We have that threat today, and I would ask people to pay close attention to what is happening here on the floor of House in the next few months. What has happened is we have to understand that patent protection of the American people is something that was written into our Constitution. It is part of the heart and soul of our country.

Benjamin Franklin is well-known as the man who discovered electricity, but he was also one of the great Founders of our Declaration of Independence and, yes, one of the people who authored our Constitution—Benjamin Franklin, the great technology hero, the hero of liberty and just for all.

If you go to Monticello and visit Thomas Jefferson's home, it is filled with inventions, small inventions. Thomas Jefferson knew that we were not going to rely on Big Government, we couldn't rely on big corporate interests and rich people, but we would rely on the genius of the American people through technology. Freedom and technology are the two things that would uplift ordinary Americans. Those things are now at stake. They are now in danger.

We, in fact, are now facing basic changes to the concept of intellectual property rights, and especially the rights of our inventors, and it is being foisted upon this body in what I would say is a very deceitful manner by powerful interest groups from the outside. But remember, with the protection that we have had, America has had the inventions. We have uplifted the standard of living of the ordinary American.

We built the reaper, which permitted us to harvest huge crops of food so that Americans were well-fed, and we became the breadbasket of the world; the cotton gin which made sure that people had clothing. There was a Black American who invented the machine that permitted the mass production of shoes. The mass production of shoes was permitted because a Black Amer-

ican whose other rights were not protected, his rights to own the intellectual property, the inventions, the patent rights to his invention, were respected. Because of that, all Americans ended up with being able to have more than just one pair of shoes. Before this man invented his invention of how to mass produce shoes, ordinary people had one pair of shoes and that was it. That was it. When they wore out, your feet wore out.

We had things like the electric light that we know that Thomas Edison was so involved with; telephones, Alexander Graham Bell. All the major inventions that we have were invented by American genius, not of very powerful corporations, but of the American genius of the American people.

What we have always had, however, is a situation where big guys did try to steal the creativity of the little guy, but in our country, they couldn't get away with it. In our country, the Philo Farnsworths knew that they would be protected if they created something that uplifted their fellow man. So Americans and American genius was put to work as never before in any country's history to make sure ordinary people, and especially our working people in our factories and our companies, could be competitive with those factories and companies and the workers overseas.

Our people don't work harder than the people overseas. That is not what made us a great country. The fact is people work really hard all over the world, especially in Third World countries where people live in utter poverty. They work really hard. But it is the technology that is put into play, the technology put into play with that hard work and the profit motive for investing in that technology and creating that technology, that is what has made the difference in an American people that are well-fed, American people with great opportunities, American people who can be proud that they have a decent standard of living and are able to make decisions for themselves and their families, not just live in the abject poverty that existed for so long in so much of the world.

No, it wasn't just our hard work. It wasn't just our natural resources. It was a Constitution that wrote into it the rights of every individual citizen. And paramount to those rights, even before the Bill of Rights in our Constitution, is a provision that guarantees that our inventors and our writers will be given the right to own, to control their invention or their book for a given period of time and profit from it.

Traditionally, our inventors have had ownership rights to what they have invented for 17 years of protection. During that 17 years, they would own it, and when they applied for a patent, once that patent was issued, they would have 17 years to control what they had invented. Also, until that patent was issued, it has always been, in the United States, kept totally secret

what that invention is until the inventor has been actually granted the rights to own that invention.

Well, these things have led directly to a genius, a surge of genius in our borders that reflected the fact that our people had freedom and technology available to them. So these are things that we have taken for granted because this is what America is all about.

But today, powerful multinational corporations, especially in the electronics industry, are trying to destroy America's patent system. My colleagues should now understand this, and the American people should understand this and be talking to their Member of Congress and their Senators, because if they succeed in undermining our patent system and destroying the rights of the little guy to own what he has created and give the big guys the power to steal from the little guys, we will see a difference in our country. Within a generation, we will no longer have these advantages that I just spoke about. What we have today is an effort by the big guys to change the rules so they can get away with stealing from the little guys.

Now, obviously, people aren't going to come out and just say: "Please let's vote for a bill that is going to break down the patent system so that big, multinational corporations can steal from American inventors." Of course they are not going to say that. So what do they say? Well, let me put it this way. 25 years ago when I first noticed—this fight has been going on the entire time that I have been in Congress.

I noticed that what had happened was that some big corporations were trying to put into the GATT implementation—GATT is a trade treaty. They were trying to put into that trade treaty's implementation language a bill that had to go through Congress, changes in our patent system that weren't even required by the treaty. I will get into what they were doing if you really want to see how heinous and sinister this is.

What were those changes 25 years ago that these big corporations wanted to make? Number one was saying that, yes, when you apply for your patent, 20 years after you apply for it, you really have no patent rights after that at all, even if it takes 15 years to get your patent.

□ 1300

The American system was the clock starts ticking when you get your patent, 17 years of protection. These big guys were trying to give our American inventors maybe no protection. After 20 years, they had nothing.

But everybody would know about it because the second provision they were trying to foist off on us was that after 18 months, if a patent had been applied for, after 18 months, even if the patent had not been granted, they were going to publish the patent application, so that every thief in the world would have heard all of the secrets of every American inventor.

They called it the Patent Application Publication Act, they were so blatant about it. After we fingered it and drew America's attention to it, they changed the name, of course.

Then it became an issue of not trying to disclose patents or patent applications, not trying to limit the amount of ownership that our patent people had; it became, instead, a battle against the "submarine patentors." That is what they called it.

That was the bogeyman that was created that day in order to get people here to vote in a way that would destroy the patent rights of the American people, the patent rights that I just outlined.

Both of those were going to be eliminated. You are going to have, instead of no disclosure, you will have full disclosure of your patent application, even before you are granted the patent, and you are not guaranteed any specific time, but your patent was going to run out after 20 years, even if you had never had any time to protect it. That is what they were trying to do, and we managed to stop them.

We put a coalition together, a bipartisan coalition. MARCY KAPTUR of Ohio and myself have been active on this issue for the last 25 years, trying to thwart these huge corporate interests who are trying to neuter the rights of the little guy, of the small inventor, of the independent operator.

How did we stop them that very first time? Well, we added an amendment on that said these changes that are being foisted on us today—or being voted on today—only apply to companies that have over 100 employees.

All of a sudden, those people who were advocating this saying, Oh, this will be good for everybody, especially the small inventor, all of a sudden, they had to withdraw the bill.

Well, if it was so good for the little guy, why would they withdraw the bill? Well, they withdrew the bill because the bill was aimed at helping huge corporate interests to step on the little guy in the United States.

We defeated that, but we have been fighting, fighting, fighting for 20 years; and this year, it looks like we have lost the leverage that we had to defeat these powerful special interests.

That is why it is important for the American people and people involved in technology development to pay attention to proposals that are being made here in the House and in the Senate concerning intellectual property rights, especially concerning the patent rights that our people have enjoyed, as I say, since the founding of our country.

Today, we have a bill that is being presented. Again, it can't be presented on how do we destroy the patent rights of the average American. They have to find something that sounds so sinister that they can set up a straw man. They will say, Look at him, we are going to beat him up. That is what this bill is about.

Just like I said, submarine patents were the reason why they had to eliminate the right of the small inventor to a guaranteed term or to have confidentiality in its patent application like before. That was a submarine patent.

Well, now, they are not saying that. They have had to come up with a better term that is even more frightening and sickening than submarine patent. The cynical nature of this type of debate on an issue was demonstrated by the fact that a corporate leader, who was on the other side of this issue than I am, has now changed his position and come to me with a description of how the words "patent troll" came about because, now, we hear that we have got to change the law, not for submarine patents, but now because patent trolls are preying on the American people, they are draining us of funds and enriching themselves, these patent trolls.

Well, where did that word come from? This gentleman that I am talking about was in a meeting with the heads of some very powerful corporations. They sat around in a circle to decide what term they should use.

He said to me: Well, I recommended "patent pirate." Well, that wasn't sinister enough, so they came up with patent troll.

By the time everyone heard that: Yes, that is the one.

Well, why is it the one? Because it sounds so sinister that it is going to be able to blind people as to who the real victim is. Now, we are out to get the patent troll, but it is the little guy, it is the small inventor, it is the independent inventors that are going to be damaged severely by an attack on a patent troll.

Now, what is a patent troll, by what they are trying to tell us? Patent troll—we keep hearing the argument that there are people in our society that are using, basically, patents that are not really good patents.

They are patents that really are not legitimate patents, and they are using these to create litigation that will enrich the lawyers—the patent trolls—because the patent trolls just reach out with some illegitimate patent claim, and then they have to get paid off or they have to go to jail.

Well, how much of this is there? There is some of that, but let us note this: There are frivolous lawsuits throughout our entire system; there are frivolous lawsuits in almost every endeavor in the American economy, but there are also legitimate lawsuits. There are people who are really damaged and deserve to have the right to sue somebody.

The law that we are facing now, that is being proposed here in Congress for a patent law, is the equivalent of eliminating the right of people to sue someone who has done damage to them in order to prevent a frivolous lawsuit from happening.

Do we really want to neuter the rights of people? Because some people abuse the system, you are going to

take the 90 percent of the cases where it is not being abused or 95 percent of the cases where it is a legitimate suit and eliminate that right in order to handle the frivolous suits? That is what is happening.

Although we are being told that all of the suits are frivolous and that the inventors are being portrayed as money-grubbers, these guys trying to take advantage of these big corporations—yeah, right. The little guy is trying to take advantage of the big guy, and that is why we have got to pass a law that dramatically restricts the rights of the little guy to deal with an infringement by a big corporation.

What this bill is, H.R. 9, and it is waiting to be brought to the floor. It could be brought to the floor in the next week, month, 2 months; we don't know yet. This bill dramatically undercuts the rights of legitimate patentholders to enforce their patents.

The patent troll element comes in with this. Today, if you are a small inventor and a large corporate interest has been infringing on your invention, if you own it for 17 years—after that, by the way, everybody can use it for free—but during that 17 years, you have a right to be compensated for the fact that you are the one who discovered this.

You invested your time and your effort and your scarce resources in order to come up with this new discovery, yes; and they have a right then to try to bring, if a large corporation is using it without paying them royalties, they have a right to bring suit.

But many of them don't have those resources. They don't have any money. They are, indeed, independent small inventors up against corporations that are worth billions of dollars and, I might say, multinational corporations.

These aren't just an American David Sarnoff. A lot of these corporations we are talking about are multinational corporations, and they have nothing to do with the American interests. They have everything to do with the interest of making money for their stockholders and their company, which is multinational, which is global in scope and not an American company necessarily.

We are going to undercut American inventors' rights to try to enforce their patent from being stolen by multinational corporations. That is what this bill does.

This is, to me, in my 25 or 26 years here in Congress, the best example of crony capitalism that I have ever seen. What is crony capitalism? That is when we pass laws and we set up regulations that are aimed at—what—helping the big guy in relationship to the little guy.

Crony capitalism is when the little guys pay and end up having their rights trampled upon, but the big guys are protected by different laws and clauses that we put into law here in Washington in the House and in the Senate.

Well, the bogeyman this time, as I say, is the patent troll. The patent troll is what? The patent troll is someone—although I wouldn't call him a patent troll. I would say there is a person who is willing to join with a small inventor—or independent inventor—to see that his patent is enforced.

We are not talking about phony patents; we are talking about legitimate patents. We are not talking about frivolous claims; we are talking about legitimate claims to patent claims of an inventor, but the inventor does not have the strength to enforce that against a big corporation that has an unlimited budget.

This bill would make it dramatically more difficult for anyone to enlist someone who is not the inventor to help them press their case against the infringement, the stuff that they had.

By the way, if this law, H.R. 9, was passed and would have been law at the time of Philo Farnsworth, Philo Farnsworth would have been beaten up, kicked around, stepped upon, and he would not have had any benefit from his invention of the picture tube.

Do we want a country in which the big guys are able to do that to the small inventors? How long are we going to be on top of things? How long will the standard of living of our people stay high and our businesses competitive and our country safe and secure because of technological advances? How long will that last if we are stepping on the little guy and we fundamentally change the nature of technology law in our country? That is what is happening.

This bill passed last year in the House, and it was stopped in the Senate. Let me note that one of the amendments that I personally had to propose that demonstrate how bad this bill is—although I managed to win the one amendment that we were able to win—was they wanted to take away the rights of an inventor to sue the Patent Office if, indeed, the Patent Office was not legally acting in terms of his patent application.

In other words, if a government agency was doing something illegally, using illegal criteria—maybe because someone else was influencing the decision from the outside, maybe there was just some sort of personality problem, maybe it was corruption from within—but if an independent inventor sees that he is being treated and is being dealt with in a way that is not consistent with the law, the small inventor has always had a right, just like any other American, to sue and take his case to court.

This is how blatant H.R. 9 is. That bill contained a provision that said the small inventor can't take his case to court. They are going to neuter the small inventor of his right to take it to court; and he has to, instead, go to an ombudsman at the Patent Office—oh, my, an ombudsman, how nice.

Eliminating the right of an American citizen and inventor in order to—

what—in order to send him to a government bureaucrat and the agency that he thinks has done him wrong, rather than having a day in court.

□ 1315

That exemplifies everything that is in H.R. 9, and it is so cynical because what we have got is, again, the American people saying, "Look at this straw man." It is called "straw man argumentation." Let's build up a straw man—the trolls—and everybody will think that we are aiming at the trolls when, in fact, the real targets are the little guys—the American independent inventors—the little guys who can't afford without some help from the outside to enforce their patents.

There is nothing wrong with someone investing in an inventor who says, "Look, I have got my whole life's savings in this. I have invented this, but this big corporation refuses to give me any royalties from my patent." There is nothing wrong with trying to help that inventor enforce his rights—there is nothing wrong at all—but the straw man is that person who is actually investing in this. Now, he didn't invent it, and he is going to profit by it. Thus, he is a troll. No. That person is fulfilling an important role in not permitting outside people to invest in inventions and with inventors.

By doing that, what we have done is diminish the value of every American patent. That understanding defeated this bill in the Senate last year because our American universities understood that, if that went in, the value of all of these patents that the American universities have been developing would dramatically go down. It diminishes the value of all patents when you eliminate that right of the people to invest in patent enforcement. That makes sense.

So there was an upheaval at almost every American major university and in many other industries that deal directly with long-term research and development, like the pharmaceutical industry, for example. They knew that we could not allow this to happen. That was stopped in the Senate the last time around. People realized that this type of crony capitalist attempt was to the detriment of the American people.

We have some of the most powerful multinational corporations still at play, trying to push this through this session of Congress. People have to know that H.R. 9 is crony capitalism personified. They need to talk to their Congressmen, and my colleagues need to talk to each other about this bill and not just accept what is being handed to them as something that has made its way through the committee process.

This bill destroys the rights of discovery for the little guy. This suit basically doesn't do anything to go up against frivolous lawsuits, but it deems all of the legitimate cases and puts them in the same category as frivolous

lawsuits. H.R. 9 causes fees, and fees on defending infringement would be levied not on the guys who have committed the crime. We are actually leveling fees on the people who are trying to enforce their rights. We are asking people to pay more money in order to enforce their rights.

It destroys, for example, the treble damage awards. Now, what does that mean? If you are a little guy, to get a lawyer to help you, that lawyer has to know he is going to make a profit when getting involved in a suit against a big corporation. Today, they have what they call triple damages. If the corporation knows that it is infringing on the little guy, there are triple damages. They are trying to get rid of those triple damages and say, "No, only actual damages."

What does that mean? The little guy can never afford to hire a lawyer. The lawyers won't get involved. You can see these big corporations, they certainly have all of the legal help they need. Basically, that provision alone neuters the leverage that a small inventor has to get some legal help in his battle to defend his or her own property rights.

This bill, by the way, fails to identify—and it even sometimes protects—lawyers who are operating on bad faith with frivolous lawsuits, as compared to trying to help—let's deter frivolous lawsuits, but let's not do it by eliminating the rights of people who have legitimate claims against big corporations.

There is another bill now emerging. In the House, it is H.R. 9. It is a disaster. We need to make sure people know that the American people have been tipped off and that we are not going to let this happen by the major, huge corporations like Google, which is one of the main groups behind this trying to rip off these little guys. We are not going to allow that to happen, and they are not going to rip us off either.

This has been recognized in the Senate. Like I said, it was stopped the last time, so there is a bill in the Senate, S. 632. Senator COONS has put this bill in. This bill reasserts the condition of willful infringement. Basically, it reinforces the idea that, if a company is willfully infringing, this is something that someone needs to be paid for and compensated for because someone intentionally stepped on his rights. It gives the PTO the discretion to award damages in these cases when you see that a big company has willfully said, We will ignore the fact that we know this group invented it. Ignore that. Just go ahead, and if they try to sue us, we will step on them, or we will get the rules of the game changed in Congress so that they don't have a chance to sue us.

S. 632, the Coons bill in the Senate, specifically allows higher education and smaller entities to be identified as legitimate owners. Thus, we are protecting the actual little guys and their educational institutions. What we also

have in the Senate bill is something that identifies bad faith in these demand letters. There are frivolous lawsuits. It actually gives strength and power to thwart these frivolous lawsuits without damaging the rights of the small inventor and the traditional rights of the American people.

We are up against a major fight, but here we have a good piece of legislation in the Senate, in the Coons bill, S. 632, and in a crony capitalism bill, H.R. 9, here in the House. The American people have to at times get involved or things will go haywire in our country. We don't have the rights and privileges that every American enjoys simply because they are in the Constitution. Over the years, the American people have stepped up when they have seen that their rights were being trampled upon.

The big guys were always around, trying to steal from the little guys, but as we saw in the case of Philo Farnsworth, we have a commitment to America's little guys. As for the men and women who maybe are not rich but who have a creative genius that will uplift all of us, we have made a commitment to them. H.R. 9 breaks that commitment and destroys their ability to actually benefit from their own creative genius.

I would ask my colleagues to spend time reading H.R. 9 and consider the straw man argument—the trolls. Get beyond the slogan, and see what effect it will have, and ask small inventors— independent inventors—and educators what impact the changes in H.R. 9 will have. Once the legislators here in the House do, and once they understand the damage that this will do to the American people and how the little guy is going to be stepped upon, they will vote against it, but they have to have their attention drawn to this.

People are busy here in Washington. The biggest problem is getting the attention of our colleagues to pay attention to a bill like H.R. 9. That is part of what the citizenry has to do if our process is going to work. They need to be talking to their Congressmen. They need to be talking to their Senators. Whether you are an educator and you deal with patents of your educational institution or whether you are an independent inventor and have an idea that will make Americans more productive and more competitive or make our country safer, you are the treasure house of this country, and they are trying to destroy that treasure right now.

I call on my colleagues to join me in opposition to H.R. 9 and to work with the Senate to try to have the Senate bill intertwined and to come to a compromise so we can have a positive bill here in the House and so we can move forward in a positive way to make sure that Americans remain prosperous, that Americans remain secure, and that Americans remain free. That is what our Constitution was all about. That is what Thomas Jefferson was all about, and that is what Benjamin

Franklin was all about. That is what we are supposed to be all about.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

IN MEMORY OF FIREFIGHTER DANIEL CORRIGAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPs) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. CAPPs. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of local Santa Barbara, California, firefighter Daniel Corrigan.

Dan was born and raised in Hayward, California, where he played football and attended Moreau Catholic High School. Dan earned his degree in mechanical engineering from Cal Poly Pomona, and he began his firefighting career with the Fresno Fire Department in 2007. In 2013, Dan joined the Santa Barbara City Fire Department, where he made a tremendous impact not only on his colleagues but on the entire community.

Throughout his career, Dan was recognized by his colleagues for his hard work ethic, his considerable intelligence, and enjoyable sense of humor.

That is why we were all so deeply saddened by the unexpected news when Dan passed away 2 weeks ago. He was just 35. His loss came much too early for a beloved hero who devoted so much of himself to serve his community.

Dan is survived by his pregnant fiancée, Sarah; by his son, Jack; by his sisters Debbie and Rosanne; and by his parents, John and Anne.

Our thoughts and prayers are with them all at this sad time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

WOMEN'S AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. PLASKETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, every year during the month of March, we celebrate the contributions to events in history and modern society by women. We call it Women's History Month, but in my district, in the U.S. Virgin Islands, the month of March is also commemorated as Virgin Islands History Month.

So, in keeping with both customs, I would like to take the time to recognize a few Virgin Islanders who have broken the glass ceiling for women in the upper echelons of law in the territory and, indeed, in the United States, and who inspired generations of young women to do the same:

The Honorable Eileen Ramona Peterson, who became the first female judge in the U.S. Virgin Islands in 1971; the Honorable J'ada Finch-Sheen, who later became the first female sworn in